



Friends of the Ridgecrest Branch Library
Board Meeting Minutes, January 18, 2023

Board members present: Jerry Bradley, Carol Pearson, Peggy Johnson, Barbara Bane, Jil Richards, Nani Banks, and Barbara Lupei. Julie Gervais attended via Zoom. **Library Administrator:** Charissa Wagner. **Guests:** Terri Middlemiss, Sandy Bradley, and Donna Rosenthal.

Jerry called the meeting to order at 10:05. He welcomed the new board members and suggested we go around the room to introduce ourselves to the new members. The agenda was approved without modifications. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

President's Report: Jerry reported

His goals for this year are to see our finances and our storage situation improved and to have fun.

Librarian's Report: Charissa reported

- From Dec. 1-Jan. 31, The Kern County Library is participating in "All the Feels," a winter reading challenge sponsored by Beanstack. The library challenges our community to read and log at least 5 books during the challenge. Participants earn fun emoji-themed badges for logging their reading and completing activities. ONE finisher from each branch will win a voucher to redeem for any Bakersfield Condors hockey game during the season. This activity is for people of all ages. Participation will add to branch statistics. All card holders can register through [KernLibrary.org](https://www.kernlibrary.org) or by downloading Beanstack on their smartphones. Staff will help people download Beanstalk and register. A paper registry option is available in the library.
- A new person has been hired to fill the part-time Technician position vacated when Vicki retired. The new hire is Teana Lewis-Hoyle.
- Planning for Summer Reading Challenge 2023 will begin soon. "Find Your Voice" is the theme. In addition to the normal yearly activities and programs, it will include writing, art, and podcasting. Dane Scharff is willing to help with the podcasting if his schedule allows.

Vice-President, Membership Report: Carol reported

- 3 new members and 8 renewals.
- Barbara Bane asked if FRBL ever has membership drives. We used to but have not had one in many years other than the recent bag sale which made membership an advantage and gained 100 new members. Jerry and Barbara B. stated they felt our fees were too low considering our costs of maintaining members. This discussion will be on the next agenda.

Treasurer's Report:

Nani provided copies of the November and December 2022 Financial Reports. She went through the reports to discuss income and expenses for those months and for the year to date.

Proposed Budget 2023:

- Nani provided copies of the Proposed Budget for 2023 for discussion and answered questions. Of particular note: FRBL will not add to the KCL Ridgecrest Branch Trust Account this year. Barbara L. mentioned that Charissa had furniture on her wish list last year that might be purchased if the balance in the Trust is sufficient to cover the cost. Charissa and I will

work on an estimate. It was suggested to consider how to filter the light from the large windows to protect furnishings in that area.

- Nani reported that United Way of Indian Wells Valley is closing business so that is one less grant we can count on per year.
- The expenses for Summer Reading and for Stipend appear larger than usual this year because reimbursements were made to Charissa for expenditures in previous years. She has agreed to seek reimbursement in a timely manner starting this year so checks can clear before the end of the year.
- The cost of periodicals may increase from \$2,300 to \$2,500. This is not unusual with subscription costs.
- The vote to approve the budget was pushed to the next meeting when we know the balance in the KCL Ridgecrest Branch Trust Account.

***Action Items:** 1. Charissa will find out how much is in the Trust Account and report at the next meeting. 2. Nani and Charissa will work together to update the 2023 Budget so it can be approved at the next meeting.

Old Business:

- Balsam Street Storefront Lease: Jerry gave a brief history of that situation so new board members would have some background on how it affected our budget and current situation.
- Web Page: Last meeting Jerry requested that Barbara L. send all meeting minutes since 2019 to Becky Parker for posting on the web page. After discussion, we decided to send the pdf files at this time and not the video files. So far files for 2019, 2020, and 2021 are complete. Barbara L. will send the 2022 files as soon as time allows. Jerry reminded us that we can let him know if we want things posted on the web page.
- Our current book storage situation remains temporary though the timeline remains unknown. Jil reported that she works there every Wednesday from 1 to 3pm. with about seven people on that team. Plastic sheets were spread out to avoid leaks and it helped with the recent heavy rains. She said she might be able to store collectable books in her garage if we need to move quickly.

***Action item:** Jil will report the number of sorted boxes and the number of unsorted boxes at the next meeting.

- Jerry asked all to help with leads on a new space. He is going to follow up with the airport board and perhaps make a presentation to the Chamber of Commerce at their meeting.
- Sandy and Barbara B. suggested letting teachers and home schoolers provide a list of the types of books they would like to have so that FRBL volunteers can pull books for them and provide them free of charge. This was considered a good method of reducing inventory and will be further planned outside board meetings.
- Kern County Library shipment drivers are not currently picking up boxes of books from the storage space. They are having to drive vans instead of box trucks now because theft of catalytic converters has been a major concern with the box trucks.

New Business

- Little Free Libraries
 - The Inyokern LFL does not have a steward. There was trouble trying to get it moved after the senior center closed. Terri offered to ask owners about a new location for it.
 - The Upjohn LFL disappeared! Peggy reported the disappearance to the police. She and Jerry are checking open areas neighboring the park to see if it was dumped nearby. Peggy volunteered to cover the cost of a new LFL if needed. A metal post was recommended rather than a wooden post. Barbara L. has ordered the LFLs in the past and can do so again if necessary.
 - The Gold Canyon LFL is doing a brisk business, but it goes through the plexiglass windows fairly fast. Ann Moorehead is the steward and she could use more replacement windows to have on hand.
- Future Fundraising Options

- Another bag sale can be tentatively planned and dates/ideas brought to the next meeting.
- Barbara B. asked if we participate in the Combined Federal Campaign annually. We explained the problems with the former EIN and also when CFC went completely on-line. She is willing to look into their current system now that FRBL has an individual EIN to see if their system is simplified and working better.
- Bring any other ideas to the next meeting that would help raise funds if we cannot have book sales.
- How to Sell Collectable Books: Jerry said Scott sells collectable books and could sell some of ours. Jil added that she would also like to do it. She could dedicate about 5 hours per week. She has already contacted John Anderson (who used to sell for FRBL and has trained others) and he is sending her a copy of his online training presentation. She would also like to offer some to the consignment shop (Shop Avenue?) and S & M Coins and Collectibles. She thinks a 50/50 split after expenses would be fair. The board gave her permission to pursue this activity. The Antiquarian Book Fair is coming up in February if anyone can attend and would like to get 3 free appraisals and perhaps sell while they are there.
- Publicity - Suggestions included using the Facebook page to remind members of the Pizza Factory and recycling fundraisers. Leaflets at the front desk were suggested. However, since we are again considering changing our membership fees, the current brochures were not accepted.

Newsletter inputs are due on January 27th to Judy Fair-Spalding. calljudy@gmail.com

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 12:05pm. The next Board meeting will be **Wednesday, February 15th** at 10:00am in the Library meeting room.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Lupei, Secretary

Addendum:

The Little Free Library (LFL) from Upjohn Park was picked up by the Parks and Recreation Department and was in safe storage. Jerry picked it up and will work with Nick from P&R to find a new place and maybe set it in concrete this time. Jerry said he thought it would be a good idea to put a name and/or phone number in the box in case something like this happens again. Peggy suggested using the library contact info and they will know who to notify.